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Mayor says police chief needs to be more transparent about investigation

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By Lynn Kawano, Anchor / Reporter [CONNECT](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - In an exclusive interview, Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell said he's tried and failed to convince the police chief to speak publicly about the FBI investigation into him.

The mayor says the public is starting to lose faith in the department because of the chief's silence.

It's the first time the mayor has been openly critical of Chief Louis Kealoha's handling of the controversy.

"The chief has told me, he's innocent," Caldwell said.

Hawaii News Now previously reported that a federal grand jury is currently hearing the FBI case against Kealoha and his wife, Katherine, a deputy prosecutor. A special federal attorney has been flying back and forth from California to lead the proceedings, which includes subpoenas for HPD records, documents and witnesses.

The case is looking into whether the Kealohas abused their power after their mailbox was stolen in 2013; they accused a family member of the crime, but the case was dismissed.

Last year, the chief told HNN in an exclusive interview, that he did nothing wrong. Since then, he has refused to comment. The mayor says that is a mistake.

"I've actually told the chief, perception becomes reality," Caldwell said. "I've encouraged him from time to time to step out and say more. That's about as much as I can do as mayor."

Political expert Colin Moore says it's a good, strategic move for the mayor to distance himself from Kealoha now.

"(Caldwell's) worried that the community doesn't trust him," said Moore.

Caldwell is up for re-election next year. "I think maybe he sees this as a way to separate himself from the scandal early on."

Kealoha declined comment for this story.

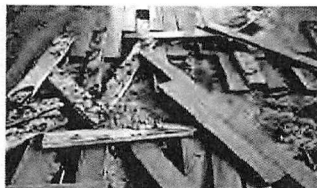
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